

Bloys-Yeck-Davenport-Harrell Documents associated with Salem (Marion County), Illinois,
Compiled by Dr. William Bloys Fawcett, Jr. May 27, 2025. Edits within [].
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Letter to Isabella Yeck, 555 Sycamore St, Cincinnati OH from W.B. Bloys, Blackburn University, Carlinville IL 3/14/1874 with enclosure on sewing machines; in response to her now missing letter of 3/7/1875. Mentions Mollie Bloys Harrell teaching school near Salem.

Carlinville, Ill. Mar 14, 1875

My dear Miss Yeck,

Your letter of Mar. 7th came to me in good time. It is not necessary for me to say that is was welcome. I was delighted with your description of the scene of which I know you were a deeply interested witness. The picture which you drew of your life was beautiful and poetic in the highest degree. God grant that the future of the life of which you spoke may be full of brightness, and without one dark shadow.

I have but little to write that will be of much interest to you except that my love for you is not diminished.

I was glad to hear from Jerry again; but very much amused at your description of his conduct. I presume that in those fits of abstractions he was laying plans for the future. I have no doubt that in every one of those pictures of his a certain fair face intruded itself excluding everything else.

Since writing the above I have been to afternoon service. The M.E. church and the Pres[byterian] Church united in the communion service. The house was full. The service was solemn and impressive. But while we were in there a sudden storm came up; and we had quite a time getting home. With my accustomed gallantry I ran off to get an umbrella for a couple of ladies, and when I got back to the church they were gone. I gave it however to a lady who, I thought, would need it. The Pres. Church has received nearly forty accessions as the result of the recent revival. The Methodists received a goodly number; and the Baptists a few. There is no Christian Church in this place. The Catholics and Lutherans are numerous.

Our examinations commence tomorrow. They will continue until Thursday. One that evening we shall have a grand reception. After that a vacation of ten days in length. I shall spend this vacation in about the same way as the last one, via working, studying and thinking of you.

We would have many things about which we could talk if we could see each other—many things that would be interesting to both of us. Rest assured darling we shall meet as soon as possible. Some nice, sun-shiny morning you would perhaps see a boy get off the train at Flora and go whistling along up the walk. Don't say anything to him until he inquires for you. You know what to do then. Just run out and "grab" him.

The length of your letters pleases me very much. How do you suppose I could get wearied in reading one of them? Nay little woman you fill all the larger place in my heart because you can write a good, long, interesting letter. My sister Mollie [Bloys] has been teaching school six miles south of Salem. It is out now and she is at home. My parents live at Coulterville in Randolph Co. They left Salem last Sept. Hester [Bloys] is at Iuka. Dowel [Bloys], my brother, is at Salem still. So you see we have been scattered considerably this year. We shall all be together again perhaps next June.

I have to ask your pardon for sending you such a letter; but I shall try to write you a better one next time.

I wish much success and happiness for Jerry in his new home. I would be glad to see him again.

Goodnight sweet woman. God's blessing along with all the happiness your heart can contain be with you.

W.B. Bloys

[Booklet/calendar Enclosed:] Established 1812. Sewing Machines and Hand Sewing. Be sure to use Clark's Spool Cotton. George A. Clark, Sole Agent. (Wound on white spools.) The best and most popular. Threat of the Age. Sold by dealers everywhere.
[Inside:] Clark's O.N.T. Purse Calendar ...[from 1875]...

Letter to Miss Isabelle Yeck, Flora IL from W.B. Bloys, Blackburn University, Carlinville IL 10/24/1875. Discusses his visit home to Bloys family in Salem, IL.

Carlinville Ills. Oct. 24, 1875.

My dear Isa,

I arrived at home in safety on Friday morning. I intended to get home on Thursday evening; but I made a mistake in choosing a train and so I was too late in getting to St. Louis. I passed the night as well as I could, but I was vexed with myself for not going on the earlier train.

I had a pleasant time at Fairfield. I staid with Mr & Mrs Galbraith. Rest assured I enjoyed it. The meeting of Presbytery was poorly attended; but a good state of feeling prevailed through the session. Everyone seemed to be interested. I left all my relatives and friends in Salem well. Mother wanted me to stay over Sabbath; but I could not.

I commenced to study yesterday. I can work more at my lessons with more cheerfulness than I would before I went home. It does one good to see the loved ones. Our Prof. in Latin and Greek has gone to Synod, and I have more time to study on that account.

All the boys have recovered from the ague and are making a better appearance than they did two weeks ago. The weather is perfectly delightful excepting the dust. There was nothing of any interest occurred on my way home. So I went from Salem to St. Louis. I met with Dr. & Mrs. Wilson. I had a pleasant chat with them.

While I was in St. Louis I bought a book that was written by Dr. Warren giving an account of the time spent in India when he was there before. If you have never read it I will send it to you after awhile.

I cannot tell how happy I have been since I saw you. If I had not gone I should have been unhappy all the year through. I am very happy in knowing that you love me and that I am permitted to love you. How strange it does seem that we should be acquainted with each other so long and not know that we cared for each other! But the Lord knows best. We will love and honor and praise him.

I am sending you a short letter again; but it tells you all. They have a joke on me here. I was to have a select reading in our afternoon exercises on Friday. I went down into the porch and practice it awhile. Then I came to my room. I had a half hour yet and I concluded to sleep awhile. My roommate let me alone until school was out. Then it was too late. There was no harm done; but I shall have to go to the Prof. and explain my conduct.

Now then, good night! God bless you and keep you. I love you more than ever before.

W.B. Bloys

Letter: to Miss Isa Yeck, Flora IL from W.B. Bloys, Blackburn University, Carlinville IL 7/31/1876. Planned visit home to Salem to see his Bloys family.

Carlinville, Ill. July 31, 1876.

My dear Isa,

I did not think you had gotten me but I presume you begin to think that I am making you wait a long time. I intended to write yesterday; but I was not well and could not sum up energy enough to do so. I hope that long before this your Mother has entirely recovered. I was sorry to hear of her severe illness. I know she had in you a watchful and faithful nurse.

We have pleasant weather now—the nights are almost chilly. I am getting ready to go home. I shall start I think, on Thursday morning. I may stop a day in Alton to look around a little and visit a friend. You need not write again until you hear from me at Salem. I don't know how soon I may be at Flora but it will not be very long before you will see that chap come up the walk.

One of the Professors who has been teaching here is going to Cin[cinnati at Lane Seminary] to teach next year. He and his excellent wife are good friends of mine. So you see I shall have friends to help me from being lonely. How good the Lord is to me! See how pleasant all this will be for me if I can carry out my plan. I am almost sorry I was as despondent sometime ago, but then it was so gloomy ahead I could not help it.

Everything is in unsettled condition here as far as the College is concerned. They have not succeeded in arranging their faculty matter yet.

On last Sunday morning Major Burke a highly esteemed and wealthy man died here. His death was very sudden. He died without making his peace with God, although he had Seventy years in which to serve God.

Since writing the above I find I shall not start home until Friday morning. I think I shall spend the remainder of the time before Sept. at Salem. I shall study some, read a little and visit a little.

I received a letter this evening from my youngest sister [Emma Amelia Bloys (1861-1881)]. It is almost the first one she ever wrote to me and it is good. I shall be very happy when I see you again.

I do not feel well at all; but I shall be cheerful and happy again soon. I will write again on next Sat. or Sunday. I must close now. I love you still fondly and truly. God bless my darling tonight! Good-bye W.B. Bloys

Letter to Isa Yeck, Flora, Clay County IL from W.B. Bloys, Salem IL 8/12/1876.

Salem, Ill. Aug. 12, 1876.

My dear Isa,

I did not get home as soon as a expected; so I did not write when I said I would. I arrived at this place on the night of the 10th. All day yesterday I was hardly able to do anything. I feel better this morning; but I am weak. It is very pleasant to be at home I assure you. As a matter of course they were all glad to see me.

There was nothing of any interest occurred on my way home. I had to spend the day in St. Louis. The weather was wet and there was mud everywhere. I went to a bookstore and procured some books, looked around over the city a little, and then sat down to wait for the train to start out.

I am going to make an effort to go to Cin. [Lane Seminary] when school commences. Preparatory to this I must study a little every day.

I think I shall be at Flora on the 16th. Wed. I will not say positively, but I expect to go then. I want to go to Fairfield at the same time. I long to see you again, my good little sweetheart.

I hope your Mother and all the rest are well now. I will not write more now; but will say in spoken words what I do not say in written.

Farewell sweet woman until I see you. W.B. Bloys

Letter to Miss Isa Yeck, Flora IL from W.B. Bloys, Salem IL 8/17/1876.

Salem Ill. Aug. 18, 1876.

My dear Isa,

I arrived at home last night. When I reached Flora last evening it was nearly ten o'clock; and there was a train just coming so I stepped on board. Just think! After hurrying away, as I did yesterday morning, that old train did not start for half an hour after I got to the depot. Then it was behind time at Fairfield. I had a pleasant visit at Fairfield; and I met several old friends. I am far more happy because of my visit to you and the friends. Everytime I am with you for awhile I come away loving you more than before. The family are all well. Mollie has gone to visit Hester [Bloys] in the Institute at Odin. I expect to carry out my plan of going to Cin. So I will begin to prepare for it. God bless you this morning, my darling. W.B. Bloys

Letter to Isa Yeck, Flora IL from W.B. Bloys, Salem IL 9/11/1876.

Salem, Ill. Sept. 11, 1876.

My Dear Isa,

I find that I am not ready to start this morning, so I shall not be up today. If nothing prevents I shall be at Flora tomorrow to spend the time with you until the train comes late in the evening. We are all well. With every renewed love, I am yours.

W.B. Bloys

Letter: to Isa Yeck, Flora IL from W.B. Bloys, Salem IL 6/4/1877.

Salem. Ills. June 4th 1877

My dear Isa,

I am at home yet as you will see by the date. The rain is coming down at a rapid rate. I think a lady of my acquaintance will have a bad time getting to school this morning. If the Fates around allow me to be present with my umbrella how gallant I would be!

I have been on a visit at Omega. I did not stay long; but I had a very pleasant time. I concluded to try my strength a little so I walked out there and back—a distance of fourteen miles. My muscles were equal to the emergency and it made me just tired enough

to sleep well. It is beautiful out in the country now. Mother Earth has on her beautiful dress of green made resplendent with gems of beautiful flowers of every kind of color. The farmers are all very busy. I suppose the majority of them are done planting; and they will not be so hurried.

I do not know just how long I shall be at home. I am getting a little restless; but still I can spend the times profitably in study, &c. I shall certainly know soon what I am to do. Green-leaved hope is still alive in my heart; but sometimes the day seems very dark and the mountainside steeper than ever. But I shall not stop to look back and brood over the dead past. There is light ahead, and I shall try to keep my eyes fixed upon that. Mollie [Bloys] and my brother [Thomas Dowell Bloys] are well [in Honey Grove, Fannin County TX]. They like Texas very well indeed.

As it is not long until mail time I must close. Rest assured of my constant love. Farewell for the present. If I go away in the next day or two I shall let you know. Most affectionately yours W.B. Bloys

Letter: to Aunt Sarah from Isa Yeck, Flora IL 6/10/1877--on death of Isa's father, Charles Yeck; on reverse of her previous note dated 4/24/1877]

June 10th, 1877

My Dear Aunt Sarah,

It falls to my lot to send you the sad news that our poor father [Charles Yeck] is dead. He died Friday morning at Six o'clock June the 8th. He went to sleep and never awoke. Oh Aunt how hard it is to part with him. I will write you more about his death. Often while I cannot now. I would have telegraphed for you, but I know you could not get here in time to see him for we could not keep him. His death was so sudden.

In haste

Isa Yeck.

Letter: Isa Yeck, Flora IL to W.B. Bloys, Salem IL 7/2/1877.

Flora Ill., July 2nd 1877

Mr. Bloys,--

I hope you will pardon this long delay; and not think you were forgotten, for indeed you was not, though sadly neglected.

My school closed last Friday, I am truly glad to be once more free; I have been almost sick for the last three weeks, but feel much better today.

Miss Edith [Bowman] and I drove out, in the buggy, to Mothers [Mrs. Louise S. Yeck] yesterday. We found them all well but oh so lonely. Dear, dear Father [Charles Yeck]; how we miss him.

I have a situation offered me in the coming winter's school; if I pass the examination for the Fathers of the Flora Public School, which will be held in the school buildings on the 5th & 6th of this month conducted by a committee of three Educators. All the public invited, and the examination principally oral. I think I shall decline if my health is not better, for I have not had much time to prepare for such an examination and unless I fell particularly bright I would be sure to fail in some of the ten branches through which we are expected to pass.

We are having very warm weather. The farmers are very busy in the harvest fields.

I must close for it nearly four o'clock--time for mail to close. Good afternoon with all my good wishes for you. Excuse scribbling for I write in haste.

I.C. Yeck

Letter: W.B. Bloys, Salem IL to Isa Yeck, Flora IL 7/28/1877.

Salem Ills. July 28, 1877.

My dear Isa,

I know I ought to have written sooner; but I was busy and tired and lazy, &c. So you see with such a variety of hinderances I could not write at once. I have nothing very urgent to keep me busy today. So I shall spend the time in working enough for exercise and in letter writing and study. I have been working for some time at moderate wages. The chief benefit I derive is the strength of muscle and the good health which I enjoy while at work. Some of my friends told me I could not stand it and tried to keep me from it; but the result has been entirely satisfactory.

There is considerable excitement here on account of the 'strike'. A train came along this morning. I hope most is over.

The Institute for this county [Marion County] opens next Saturday. A good attendance is expected. There may be such a thing as my teaching next winter; but I shall not attend the Institute. My sister [Hester Bloys] is going. Profs. Parkinson and Hull of the Southern Ills. Normal School will be here to conduct the exercises. My sister Hester is to teach two miles east of town. I think Mollie will teach in [Honey Grove,] Texas at a salary of sixty or seventy dollars per month. I am glad you are not going to teach. It does wear one's life more than any other employment I believe. But it is a grand, noble work.

The health of the people here is generally good. Occasionally there is a case of fever; but we all have cause to be thankful for the long time of health which we have enjoyed.

The Lady Minister has gone to Carlyle. She was here more than three weeks. I don't know how much good she accomplished. I did not attend her meetings any toward the last. In all I think I went six times.

In regard to the question which you discussed in your S.S. [Sunday School] class I intended to look up the evidence for and against it; but something caused it to pass out of mind until this morning when I could not do it. I think however there is such a things as sinning away the day of grace or rejecting God's offers of mercy and pardon until he ceases to offer them and withdraws his spirit. I shall look that up soon and send you the references, whatever I find.

Well my darling, I must bid you good morning. I wish you a happy day, and God's continued favor and blessing. I love you fondly and truly. Parson me for neglecting you so long and rest assured it was not so in heart. Most affectionately yours. W.B. Bloys

Letter: Isa Yeck, Flora IL to W.B. Bloys, Salem, Marion County, IL 8/12/1877.

Flora, Ill. Aug. 12th 1877

Mr. Bloys

I think it is I who needs to ask forgiveness and not you for not writing sooner; I do not think we can properly use the word neglect in this case, for I know I do not do so intentionally. You always seem so near, that the time lengthens into weeks (from the time I receive your letters until I answer them) before I am scarcely aware of it, but I must acknowledge that when it is your letter that is expected, the arrival is very anxiously waited for: 'There now!' I should not have written this, but you know it is my disposition to be very frank.

Our [Flora/Clay County] Teaching Institute began last Monday, Aug. 6th conducted by Prof. Foster from Southern Illinois Normal. The attendance is not very large yet. We expect state Supt. Etter next Tuesday. He will lecture in the evening at the M.E. church. I have not attended the institute this week, and perhaps will only get to attend the last two weeks but my sympathies goes with them in all they do; for truly "it is a noble cause to work in"; and one that I intend to re-enlist in next spring. How often I earnestly wish that it could have been my lot to have possessed a thorough education. That I could tread with free, unshrinking feet the pleasant paths of education's difficult cliffs. I would not then tremble at every step I took, with the fear of stumbling and falling. But my weary brain in vain it sighs, shut in this homely prison room, To breaks its hated bonds and fly the empty state that is its doom.

Miss Edith [Bowman], and in fact all of the family, is quite excited about leaving Flora. The Dr. [Bowman] is talking about moving to Iowa next Spring or Summer; and is going up there this fall to look for them a new home, but I shall not think they are going until they are ready to start.

The Rev. Van Arsdale has moved to Mr. Carmel. The church here treated him very badly before he went away. We were very sorry to part with them for they was such pleasant neighbors. The Rev. Paisley preached for them now. I do not know that he will stay.

I must desist writing, excuse this poorly written letter. Good night, May Good richest blessings rest and abide with you always. Isa Yeck

Letter: to Miss Isa Yeck, Flora IL from W.B. Bloys, Salem IL 8/23/1877.

Salem Ills. Aug. 23rd 1877.

My dear Isa,

Your kind letter of the 12th was gladly received. I have not much time in which to write; but if I defer it again the time will be too long. The train will come along in about an hour & a half; and this must go to the P.O., &c.

The long wished for rain has come at last, and the poor, parched vegetation is drinking to its fill the showers which kind Heaven has sent. I sowed turnips in the garden some time ago, and I see they are coming up nicely. I have been out and gathered some tomatoes which I raised since I came home. Do not think these are the first we have had, for we have had them on hand a good while.

Our [Marion] County [Teachers'] Institute is in session yet. They have Profs. Parkinson & Hull from the Southern Normal. I do not like them very well. They are about one hundred and fifty teachers in attendance. I presume that all of these will not be teachers this year; but they are attending with that view eventually. I am not sure but I told you about the Institute in my last. If I did you may laugh at me when you see me again.

A lady friend of ours came, I think on the 10th, and stayed with us until yesterday morning. We were acquainted with her in Mo. When she was a happy girl. We were present at her wedding and through all these years have been firm friends. Consumption has laid on her his withering hand; and she is slowly dying. She is going to New York in the hope that the sea air will help her. God grant that it may; but I fear that before another year comes her children will be motherless. There is something inexpressible sad in the thought of one so young and beautiful fading slowly away. It is like a beautiful flower springing up, nourished by the warm earth, warmed and drawn into plant life by the warm rays of the sun. Its thirst cooled by the pearly drops of dew; and in time sending out its rich fragrance to everything around. The destroyer lays his wrestling hand upon it noontide, and before evening its fragrance and beauty have faded forever.

You almost surprised me when you told me of Dr. Bowman's contemplated move to Iowa. I shall be sorry if they do go; for I shall lose my best friends.

My schoolgirl needs to have more confidence in herself. Education is never easy. It has at its very source the idea of refining and strengthening by discipline. Discipline is never easy. Even after knowledge is acquired it requires ever effort, patient and persistent, to keep it. If you grow weary in the effort, take a rest, & then climb again. Others are toiling side by side with you. After awhile we will breathe the fresh air; and see the beautiful light from the summit. But it cannot be all at once. Well, adieu for the present. You will get this at noon. It is now nearly half past mine. Almost the same as if I had talked with you so long.

Goodbye sweet woman! My God bless you

W.B. Bloys

Letter: to William Benjamin Bloys, Salem IL from Isabelle Yeck, Flora IL 9/2/1877.

Flora Ill. Sept. 2nd 1877

Mr. Bloys,

Your interesting letter of Aug. 23rd was received that day (noon). Truly it was almost as if you were speaking to me, for the little messenger did not tarry long on his way.

To-day is a beautiful Fall day. So cool and pleasant and yet in some-way mournful. It calls to my mind those old and familiar lines "The Melancholy days have come; the Saddest of the Year"; We had a nice rain last night, and all vegetation seems to be forming new resolutions, or determinations to become once more beautiful. I see some of my flowers putting forth new buds, only to be nipped by the coming frost, which we know must surely come before two short months roll by. While looking at those flowers, I could but exclaim, "how like so many lives when in the bloom of life they are nipped by death's icy finders"!

One of our acquaintance a young man just entering upon the stage of active life, has been snatched from our midst since I last wrote to you: Joseph Snider (or perhaps you remember him better by his home name Seth,) he was scaled to death by a explosion of a locomotive at St. Joseph Mo. He died six hours after the accident; was rational until four minutes before he died; his sufferings were terrible, but he said "all was well he believed in Jesus." They had his remains brought home; he died on Sabbath, and his corpse did not get here until Thursday. So it was impossible for them to see him; they had been expecting him home. What a sad coming home that was! It seemed almost more than his Mother could bear.

Our [Clay County Teachers'] Institute closed on Thursday. The Doctor [Bowman] has almost changed his mind about moving to Iowa. We have considerable amount of amusement

over the Iowa question. I must desist writing for it is time for the Sabbath School bell to ring.

Excuse scribbling for I have written in haste. Adieu for the present. A pleasant and happy evening for you. I remain every yours. Isa Yeck P.S. Monday morning I am ashamed of this poorly written letter, but have not the time to rewrite it. This is a beautiful morning, and we are very busy canning tomatoes. I congratulate you on your garden. I send with this the Flora paper, which has the announcement of Septh Sniders death. Also a piece of poetry, which the leaves that are falling so thickly this morning, reminded me of. Pardon this sentimentality. Isa

Letter: to Isabelle Yeck, Flora IL from William Benjamin Bloys, Salem IL 4/25/1878.

Salem, Ills. April 25th 1878

My Dear Isa;

After so long a time I write to you. I arrived at home that day, on which I saw your last, about one o'clock. I rested, or tried to do so. I had a little experience with the ague; but recovered bravely in time to go to Mr. Vernon on Saturday. I was quite weak, and really not able for such a trip; but I get along, for the Lord helped me. I preached on Sunday morning and evening.

It is possible that I will be in Flora when Presbytery meets there on the 2nd of May. I shall certainly be there if I can make connection so as to get to another point in time.

Everything is very beautiful here. Rose are in bloom, &c. I fear that the weather will be cold enough to injure our tender plants.

I do not know positively where I am to work during the Summer. I shall know soon, however. I am trying to get ready for the work of the Summer; and I make slow progress. I draw pictures in my mind sometimes, pictures of usefulness, of a life devoted to the service of Christ, of many coming to the feet of the Redeemer & my telling them of the Good way. But sometimes the way seems darker. I will trust in God looking to him for help and guidance and strength.

My sister [Molly Bloys is] still here & [has a] high opinion of Texas. It is possible she will stay here another year.

I find the Temperance movement has been here; and nearly everybody has donned the blue ribbon. I suppose I must do the same in order to keep along with the tide; but I am so temperate already as I expect to be. They are to have a meeting on Sat. evening. My younger sister helps them in their singing. Well I must close. Farewell sweet heart! Most affectionately yours

W.B. Bloys

If you write before May 2nd, direct to this place.

Letter: to Isa Yeck, Flora IL from W.B. Bloys, Friendsville, Wabash County IL 5/10/1878.

Friendsville Ills. May 10th 1878

My Dear Isa;

I have been here one week this evening. It is now about 7 o'clock, very nearly the hour at which I arrived. The trip was made in safety. In going to Vincennes I met some friends who helped make the trip so far a pleasant one. I waited at Vin. about two hours. It was a little tedious; but soon passed. I chartered a wagon to take my trunk and myself across the country from Allendale, a distance of seven miles. The road was very muddy and the prospect on that afternoon did not seem pleasant by any means. But the mud soon dried and now we have a very pretty country.

I like the country around here very well. It is not so level as that around Flora and Salem. The fields are beautiful. Wheat is forming the head; before many days the farmers will be busy in harvest; and the little seas and oceans of waving, golden grain will be transformed into white loaves to man's use.

The people are quite sociable and friendly. I already like them very well. I preach at this place and at Allendale over on the R.R. [railroad]. I preached here at eleven o'clock last Sunday and rode over to the other place to preach at 3 o'clock. I was pretty tired when night came. That is to be my work, if I stay, all this summer. I shall be pretty busy; but I think it will be pleasant. The people are all strange to me; but I am getting acquainted. I am making my home at Mr. [Rev. Herbert Coulter] Baldrige's [1856-1894] the Pres[byterian] minster who lives here [at the Wabash Presbyterian Church]. The family are quite pleasant. I use his books and spend my time in his study. I feel very grateful for the privileges I enjoy.

I go to Mt. Carmel next week sometime. That you, perhaps remember was the scene of the tornado last June.

I spend my time very pleasantly, studying, reading, visiting, chopping stove wood, &c. Just after dinner, the other day, the bees swarmed. I helped to hive them. They are doing very well though they were put into a pine box instead of a pleasant hive.

We get our mail three times per week instead of twice per day, as at Flora, &c. This will go to Mt. Carmel in the morning; and I hope it will reach you tomorrow evening at five o'clock.

So far as I can see now the prospect so far as work is concerned is good. Financially my vacation work will not amount to much. But the Lord knoweth best; into his hands I put myself. I know it will all be well.

Kind regards to all the family. I continually love you. Most affectionately

W.B. Bloys
Friendsville, Wabash Co. Illinois

Letter: to Miss Isabelle Yeck, Flora IL from William Benjamin Bloys, Salem IL 7/22/1878.
Salem, Ills. July 22nd, 1878

My Dear Isa;

I write this morning to say that it is not possible for me to stop over at Flora long enough to see you. I attended my sister's [Hester Bloys] wedding [to William James Harrell], then went with them to their new home east of Kimmindy, a distance of fifteen miles across the country. On account of that I could not go to Flora on Sat. I must be in Friendsville tonight. If I lose a train I cannot make connection at Vincennes.

I long to see you now! But I shall be at home again about Sept. 1st. I know you will be happy to hear that I pronounced the ceremony for my sister. Rest assured of my constant love. God bless you this morning. W.B. Bloys

Letter: to William Benjamin Bloys, Salem IL from Isabelle Yeck, Flora IL 5/17/1879.

May 17th, 1879

Mr. Bloys,-

You will be surprised when you receive Mrs. Bowman's letter [from Flora IL], but when I told her how indefinite the time of our wedding, she said "I will write to Mr. Bloys myself, with your permission, and tell him my wishes, for you must not wait until we are gone, if you do, I will feel real hurt." She has just handed me her letter for inspection, and insists on mailing it this evening. All I have to say is, do as you think best., and do not let us interfere with any of your future plans. As Mrs. Bowman says this is only her request. She hopes that you will not think her presumptuous. She wishes us to be married in her parlor and her to have the honor of doing all she can to make us happy.

Yours, in haste

Isa Yeck

Letter: to Mr. William Benjamin Bloys, Salem, Marion County IL from Mrs./Dr. Jeremiah Bowman, Flora IL 5/18/1879-mentioned in previous letter.

May 18th, Flora.

Mr. Bloys,

Isa has informed me of your future plans. I write to request that your marriage take place on the 22 inst., as we expect to start our journey on the 26th and I should regret very much to be absent then. It is Isa's wish that the wedding be private, excepting relations; and I cordially invite your Father and Mother to be present.

This is only my request, as I do not wish to dictate to you, or interfere with your plans.

Yours Respectfully, Mrs. Bowman

Marriage certificate: William Benjamin Bloys of Salem IL & Isabelle Yeck of Flora (Clay County) IL 5/22/1879.

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

STATE OF ILLINOIS

COUNTY OF CLAY

This certifies That Mr. Wm B. Bloys of Salem in the State of Ills and Miss Isabella Yeck of Flora in the State of Ills were at Flora in said County by me joined together in <Holy Matrimony>

on the 22nd day of May in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventy Nine

In presence of
Mr. J.M. Billings
Jennie McFarland

Allen McFarland
Pastor of the 1st Presby of Flora Ills.

Letter: to Rev. William Benjamin Bloys, Salem, Marion County, Illinois from Rev. Allen Percy Bissell (1882-1952), Delhi, Hamilton County, Ohio 6/4/1879.

Delhi, Hamilton Co, Ohio
June 4th, 1879.

My Dear Bloys;

Your letter & a high priced photo came to hand all right. We will try & pay the price when we get monies enough ahead to pay for 'sitting'. I don't know when that will be, at present rates & prospects. However our bonanza may be struck some time. We are glad to have yours & suppose you can live on trust a little time.

From a few lines I saw in the Herald Presb. I am at a loss to know how you can go to Texas 'alone' without leaving an empty love heart behind. I should like to have you apply Dr. Smith's logic to the case & make your answer to me about this matter agree with the veracity of a man in your position. However, logic or no logic, you will doubtless accept our congratulations.

I suppose from your letter that yesterday, or more likely today, you are on Presbytery's rack. I presume you will get through without dislocated bones.

I don't wonder at your sorrowful farewell to Lane. Your days of simple private life & responsibility are over. And no one knows what that means till he has tried it. And now I want to give you a volume of compressed advice. During these first years of your ministry read & study much. Get time, steal time for this work. While the Sem. course is fresh add to it by wide reading on the different subjects. It will all be capital at interest & the sooner it is in bank and the larger its amount the better will be your income from it for all coming time.

I had a hurried the conference paper before the Ministers Meeting last Monday. The subject was "How shall we deal with non-resident church members & with those who absent themselves from Communion? I never can find much time for original work in a week in addition to my preparation for Sabbath. However, I had some hastily jotted thoughts. The discussion was postponed till next week, as Anthony Comstock was present & talked about his work in the suppression of obscene literature. He spoke again & more at length on the evening in the parlor of the Burnet House. I did not hear him there as I could not afford to remain out as late as could be necessary for that.

The Meth. Ch. Here had a strawberry festival last Friday, which with its accessories, as fancy table &c, &c. netted them \$100.00. It is strange how people give at such times through the medium of their bellies what they won't give in any other way. We have a Festival next Friday; not known yet how much we shall clear.

We shall be glad to hear at any time about you & yours. May the Lord bless you in your work. Regard from us all. Yours in C., A.P. Bissell

Postcard: to Mrs. Isabelle Catherine Yeck Bloys, Salem, Marion County IL from William Benjamin Bloys, St. Louis MO, postmark 6/10/1879.

St. L[ouis] Union Depot, June 9th, 1879.

All right so far. I start at 9:30. Ticket purchased, trunk checked, &c. I feel hopeful & expect to go through all night. I go via M.K. & I. I shall write again from Sherman [Texas]. You may direct to Honey Grove, Fannin County [where his brother, T.D. Bloys, was postmaster]. Much love to all. Vale! Bona mia nxor. W.B.B.

Letter to Mrs. Isabelle Yeck Bloys, Salem IL from William Benjamin Bloys, Coleman IL 8/12/1879 [not 1874]—in response to her letter 7/27/1879.

Coleman, Texas August 12th, 1874.

My dear wife;

I got back last night from my trip to Belle Plain & Buffalo Gap. I found your letter of July 27th waiting for me. Your last letter before that was dated July 16th; so you see there was quite a long time that I did not hear from you. I shall not be away again soon.

You cannot tell how much good your letters do me; and when they do not come at the right time I feel disappointed. There is occasionally some irregularity in the mails. Generally a letter comes in five or six days. I am specially glad to hear from you now.

I had a pleasant trip, that is in most respects. It rained while I was gone and hindered me in doing some work. I made some very pleasant acquaintances. I really enjoyed my trip.

The rain was thankfully received by all in this country. The ground was very dry & dusty. Grass was failing & water was drying up everywhere. Sometimes men would have to travel a whole day without water for themselves or horses. It has the appearance of rain now again.

Well, dearie, it is not long now until we can see each other again. I shall meet you at Sherman with a light wagon; and can bring anything out here that you wish to bring with you. If you have anything heavy besides your trunks you can sent it by freight. Start it in advance of yourself. I have not doubt the Dr. [Jeramiah Bowman] is correct about the carpet. I think they will check your trunks, both of them. I am sure the M.K. & T. R.R. will do so from St. Louis [MO] to Sherman [TX]. When you start from St. Louis get your ticket for Sherman unless I tell you otherwise.

I am glad Mr. Little wrote to you. I shall try to know positively when he is ready. If you start on the morning of the 1st of Sept, I must leave here as early as the 26th of August so as to make it.

We can get everything we need here for housekeeping. It is probable that we shall board for a month or two; because it is difficult to get a house here. There are no good houses.

We shall go from Sherman over to Honey Grove to see brother [T.D. Bloys] & get my books, &c. You will get to see a little of Texas life; camping out &c., &c.

Don't try to bring anything that is not necessary. Pack your things closely as they will not move about in your trunks. I paid for a strap for your large trunk & told Pa [Mordecai Bloys] to make it for you. Perhaps you had better get one for your small trunk also. You will find Mr. [Rev./Dr. Henry Smith] Little very kind & good.

I hope you had a pleasant visit over at Salem [IL]. Love to all, especially to your Mother & [Yeck] brothers & sisters. I am well, but tired. I am resting. God bless you & give you help. I shall write as often as possible between now & starting time. I long to see you again. I think these "exercises" will be rather prolonged. I love you. Yours affectionately. W.B. Bloys.

Newspaper: Mrs. T.D. (Etta) Bloys visited by her mother, Mrs. Davenport and sister, May/Mae Davenport of Salem IL (*Honey Grove TX signal*, Fri., 2/9/1894).

Mrs. T.D. Bloys is enjoying a visit of her mother and sister, Mrs. [Nancy Jennings] Davenport and daughter May [aka Mae Davenport], of Salem, Ill.

Newspaper: Mrs. T.D. [Etta Davenport] Bloys returns from Salem IL visit (*Honey Grove TX signal*, Fri., 9/6/1895).

The number of widowers in the city [of Honey Grove] was decreased one this week by the return of Mrs. T.D. Bloys from an extended visit to relatives in Illinois. T.D. now quitted the haunts of loaferdome and joined again the ranks of respectability.

Newspaper: Mamie Bryan, sister of William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925), US Presidential Democratic Party Candidate, and relative of Mrs. T.D./Etta Davenport Bloys, visits Honey Grove TX (*Bonham Tx news*, Fri., 1/22/1897).

Honey Grove Citizen.

Our city is today honored by the present of a distinguished lady and whose family name has been on every tongue throughout the United States during the last campaign and our beautiful city today extends a most cordial welcome to Miss Mamie Bryan [aka Mary Elizabeth Bryan], a sister to that grand and noble man, Hon. W.J. Bryan and the man who will succeed McKinley as president of the United States. Miss Bryan arrived on Wednesday evening and is the guest of her cousin, Mr. T.D. Bloys of Fourteenth St. [in Honey Grove TX], and we hope her stay will be a long and pleasant one. She is accompanied by Miss [Nancy Jennings] Davenport, a half-sister of Mrs. Bloys [actually her step-mother]. Both ladies reside in Salem, Ill., . . . of the Bryan family hold home . . . While our people . . . delighted in having the ladies in our midst. Mr. Bloys has raised our hopes that are

the month closes, our people will have the opportunity of seeing and perhaps hearing Hon. Wm. J. Bryan, as it is expected he will spend at least twenty-four hours in Honey Grove while on his Southern trip. Should he do so, and the surrounding country know when he is to be here, the fatted calf would surely be slaughtered in honor of the event as it would be made a grand holiday. It is to be hoped he will see his way clear to accept the invitation.

Newspaper: William Jennings Bryan, Democratic Party Presidential candidate visits Honey Grove TX & T.D. Bloys family (*Honey Grove TX signal*, Fri., 2/12/1897).

Wm. J. BRYAN IN HONEY GROVE

Well might the Boy Orator of the Platte have repeated the words of Caesar—Veni Vidi Vici—when he took leave of the people of Honey Grove. Mr. Bryan has visited many cities, towns and hamlets in these United States and has been royally received at every place, but surely no people ever extended a warmer greeting than the citizens of Honey Grove. To be sure larger numbers have met him, but a greater percent, of the population never joined in a reception and welcome to any man. Few men, women or children are there in Honey Grove who have not grasped the hand of this beloved American. Thursday morning a telegram was received by Mr. T.D. Bloys from Mr. Bryan, stating that he would arrive in Honey Grove Friday a 12 o'clock. The news soon spread like wild fire and the entire town was in a flutter of delight. A meeting was called by the precinct chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee to prepare for the reception of the distinguished guest, and at 4 o'clock a large number of citizens gathered at the city hall in response to the call. A committee on Arrangements was appointed consisting of Messrs. P.M. Price, S.L. Erwin, and W.H. Stewart, with instructions to select a suitable place for the speaking and make other necessary arrangements. Messrs. Jno. J. Ballinger, J.H. King, and R.B. Smith were appointed on a committee to ask the merchants to close their stores at the time of Mr. Bryan's arrival and urge all citizens to be at the depot at the train's arrival. A reception committee consisting of Messrs E.E. Block, Wm. Bell, Jno. L. Ballinger, J.H. Lynn, C.A. Lenman, S.H. Gardner, Ed. H. Love, J.J. Rhodes, A.S. Rutherford, J.H. Smith and J.G. Boyle was appointed and of which the chairman of the meeting was elected chairman.

Friday morning several member of the Reception Committee, and a number of other citizens boarded the early train from Ladonia to meet Mr. Bryan. Arriving in that city it was learned that the train from Galveston was over two hours late, and disappointment spread to every face. Mr. Potterfield, the genial jolly conductor, telegraphed headquarters for permission to hold his train until the arrival of the train from Galveston. The answer came, "Roll out on time.: The case looked hopeless, but Mr. Porterfield was not discouraged and renewed his appeal, finally securing permission to wait for Mr. Bryan's train. It is unnecessary to state that the party is under many obligations to the Santa Fe's obliging conductor.

About 11 o'clock the train from Galveston rolled in. Ladonia people turned out en mass to greet the great silver champion, and never have I seen such a rush for position of advantage to get a peep at any man. Some climbed over the train, some crawled under, and such a push and jam was never seen. When the Galveston train pulled out Mr. Bryan was escorted to the rear end of the Honey Grove train and there made a speech of about five minutes. In the midst of his address the conductor told him that it was time to go. "All right," said Mr. Bryan, "the beauty of this silver question is that a man can begin a speech anywhere and quit anywhere. I am glad it's time to go, for I do not know what I'd say if I talked longer, and if I should speak all day I wouldn't get half through."

When the train arrived at Honey Grove the platform and grounds surround were filled with an innumerable host like unto the throng the Old John from Patmos' isle. Mr. Bryan appeared at the rear end of the train and was introduced by J. H. Lowry. He made a short talk saying that some good had come of having a republican in the community—that had Mr. T.D. Bloys, not lived in Honey Grove he might never have enjoyed the pleasure of meeting the people of Honey Grove. He closed by thanking the people for their kind greeting. The came a terrible rush; every person present tried to shake Mr. Bryan's hand at the same time, and the stampede was so great that dangerous results were threatened. The committee saw that Mr. Bryan would have to be pulled away or he would never reach the place announced for speaking, and by hard work the crowd was pushed aside and the distinguished guest safely landed in a carriage. The crowd at the depot was estimated at 3,000.

At 3:15 an audience of about three thousand people gathered at the public school building to hear Mr. Bryan speak. He spoke from the east door of the building and the

space in front. The address consumed only 45 minutes and touched only a few issues. The large audience heard every word uttered by the speaker and all were delighted with the address. Mr. Bryan stands right at the head in the list of orators. His voice is as clear as a silver bell, every utterance is musical and every sentence seems just the proper length. He speaks without the slightest effort, and what seems to the audience but the ordinary tone of conversation can be heard distinctly by thousands. At the close of his address it seemed that every man, woman and child grasped the orator's hand.

Friday night at the residence of Mr. Bloys, a reception was tendered, and a large number of ladies and gentlemen called upon the distinguished guest. Every caller went away singing the praises of this great and good man. It is sufficient to say that none were disappointed. For months we have been reading of the brilliant oratory, his charming personality and his wonderful magnetism, but with one accord we may say with Sheba's queen, "The half has not been told." After meeting this great man it is easy to understand why the largest audience that ever greeted man gathered around him whenever he appears.

Saturday morning Mr. Bryan spent a few minutes shaking hands with admirers on the square. He also called upon Messrs. M.B. Crowson, J.M. Williamson and T.H. Seaton, who were sick and unable to leave their rooms. At noon he boarded the west-bound T. and P. [Texas & Pacific] train for Sherman. At Bonham a crowd of 1,000 people had gathered to greet the distinguished gentleman and he made a fifteen minute speech. He lectured in Sherman Saturday night to an audience of 1,500 people, every seat in the opera house being sold. There was a large throng of people in the city unable to secure tickets to the lecture, and these Mr. Bryan addressed Saturday afternoon from the courthouse steps.

From Sherman Mr. Bryan went to Lincoln, Neb. His plans for the future are unknown to the writer, further than he will rest a few weeks before undertaking other work. Some journals and political enemies, envious of Bryan's great and growing popularity, have attributed mercenary motives to his movements since the election. Such accusations need not be answered as the great orator's actions stamp falsehood upon the charges. He could easily have earned \$20,000 in Texas within a month, while here he was constantly in receipt of telegrams soliciting lectures, and there's hardly a town, in the state in which he could not have cleared \$500 for a single lecture.

Newspaper: May Davenport and Mary Elizabeth Bryan visit Honey Grove TX (*Honey Grove TX signal*, Fri., 2/19/1897).

There was quite a distinguished lady visitor to the city yesterday, who is made prominent by the large share of public attention her brother has commanded for the past seven or eight months. The young lady was Miss Mary Bryan, the sister of Hon. Williams Jennings Bryan, the democratic nominee for president in the late campaign. Miss Bryan is a cousin of Mrs. Bloys at Honey Grove and has been visiting her for the past two or three weeks. Miss Bryan, accompanied by Mr. R.L. Wood, Miss May Davenport [1871-1957] and Mr. S.H. Gardner, a Honey Grove attorney, arrived in the city on the 9:56 train in the morning and spent the day in Paris [in Lamar County TX] as the guests of Miss Pleda Wynne, one of Paris' popular young ladies, and returned to Honey Grove on the 7 o'clock train in the evening. In the afternoon Mr. Sion S. Record with his characteristic gallantry hired the finest surrey at Brosius' living stable and carried the ladies for a drive around the city.

Newspaper: Mrs. M.C. [aka Nancy Jennings] & May Davenport of Salem IL visit T.D. Bloys family in Honey Grove TX (*Honey Grove TX signal*, Fri., 3/15/1900). Nancy Jennings Davenport was Etta Davenport Bloy's step mother and May was her youngest step-sister.

Mrs. M.C. Davenport and daughter, Miss Mae [Davenport], left Wednesday [3/13/1900] for their home at Salem, Ill., after an extended visit to Mr. [T.D.] Bloys and family.

Newspaper: Mrs. Nancy Jennings Davenport & daughter, May, of Salem IL visit T.D. Bloys family in Honey Grove (*Honey Grove signal*, Fri., 2/3/1905).

Mrs. Davenport and daughter, Miss May, of Salem, Ill., who had been visiting Mr. T.D. Bloys and family left Monday [1/30/1905] for a visit to relatives in Mississippi.

Newspaper: Mrs. Frances Jennings Davenport & daughter May, of Salem IL visit T.D. Bloys family in Honey Grove (*Honey Grove signal*, Fri., 12/20/1907).

Mrs. Davenport and daughter, Miss May, of Salem, Ill., [step] mother and [step] sister of Mrs. T.D. Bloys, arrived last Friday [12/13] and will spend several weeks with Mr. and Mrs. Bloys. These ladies have visited here before and their many Honey Grove friends extend a warm welcome.

Newspaper: Mrs. T.D. Bloys (aka Etta Davenport Bloys) traveled to Salem IL to visit her Davenport & other relatives. See 6/28/1912 for her return almost a month later (*Honey Grove TX signal*, Fri., 5/17/1912).

Mrs. T.D. Bloys left [Honey Grove] this week for Salem, Ill., to spend some time with relatives.

Newspaper: Mrs. T.D. Bloys [Etta Davenport Bloys] returns from Salem IL to her home in Honey Grove TX after a month-long visit (See 5/17/1912; *Honey Grove signal TX*, Fri., 6/28/1912).

Mrs. T.D. Bloys arrived home last Friday night from an extended visit at her old home in [Salem,] Illinois.

Newspaper: Mrs. T.D. Bloys [aka Etta Davenport Bloys] returns to Honey Grove TX from long visit with Davenport relatives in Salem IL and St. Louis MO (*Honey Grove TX signal*, Fri., 11/21/1913).

Mrs. T.D. Bloys arrived home last Thursday from an extended visit with [Davenport] relatives at her old home, Salem, Ill., and St. Louis [MO].

Obituary: Thomas Dowel Bloys died Honey Grove TX, 3/6/1914 (*Honey Grove TX Signal*, Fri. 3/13/1914).

T.D. Bloys.

The death of T.D. Bloys last Friday night [3/6/1914] was not an unexpected event. It had been known for some time that Mr. Bloys' condition was serious, that there was no hope for restoration of wanted strength, and that the summons might come at any time, yet the wonderful energy of the man kept him cheerful and at his place of business [the post office] even unto the journey's end. Friday night a few friends called to spend the evening in a social way with Mr. and Mrs. Bloys. Apparently Mr. Bloys was feeling better than for several days and never had he appeared more cheerful. It was never 11 o'clock when Mr. Bloys arose from his chair to get something, and he had taken a few steps when he fell to the floor. He was hurriedly placed on his bed and a physician was summoned, but the call from the great beyond had come, in ten minutes T.D. Bloys was dead.

Thomas Dowel Bloys was born in Carroll county, Tennessee, August 1, 1851. He moved to Honey Grove in 1878, and with the exception of a short time spent in San Antonio, resided here until the day of his death. Mr. Bloys was appointed postmaster for Honey Grove in 1882 and served five years. He was again appointed postmaster in 1898 and he lived until April 5 his last term of service of postmaster would have been sixteen years.

Mr. Bloys was married twice, his first wife being Miss Sophronia McDonald, who died in 1881. His second wife, who as Miss Etta Davenport, of Salem, Ill., survives him. Mr. Bloys also leaves two sons, J.D. [Joseph Dowel], of [Fresno,] California, and James E., of Dallas. One sister [Mrs. Wilkinson] resides in [Enloe] Delta county and one in Illinois. The only brother [Rev. W.B. Bloys] lives in Fort Davis, Texas.

Mr. Bloys was a man of splendid business ability and of great energy. Few men have had such a long term as postmaster and few have served so acceptably. He was a warm-hearted man, generous to a fault, and companionable. He was a great reader and gathered a great store of information. There are many, many friends in Honey Grove and throughout the country who sorrow because big-hearted genial Dowel Bloys is no more.

The funeral Sunday was conducted at the residence of Rev. E.L. Moore, pastor of the [Honey Grove] Presbyterian church. The burial was at Oakwood [cemetery] in the presence of one of the largest crowds ever gathered there.

Newspaper: Mrs. T.D. Bloys, Honey Grove TX, visiting Davenport & other relatives in Salem IL (*Honey Grove TX signal*, Fri., 9/4/1914).

Mrs. T.D. Bloys left [Honey Grove] yesterday for Salem, Ill., where she will spend several weeks with relatives.

Newspaper: Etta Davenport Bloys (aka Mrs. T.D. Bloys) of Dallas & Mae Davenport, her step sister, from Salem IL visit Mr/Mrs Albert Hester in Honey Grove TX (*Ladonia TX news*, Fri., 7/27/1928).

Mrs. Etta Bloys of Dallas and Miss Mae Davenport of Salem, Ill., are visiting Mr. and Mrs. Albert Hester [in Honey Grove TX].

Obituary: Marietta "Etta" Davenport Bloys, d. 12/2/1929 Dallas TX (*Honey Grove TX signal* citizen, Fri., 12/6/1929).

Mrs. Etta Bloys Dead. News was received here Tuesday morning of the death of Mrs. Etta Bloys, which occurred at the home of her son, J. E. Bloys, in Dallas Monday night at 10:30 o'clock, death coming very suddenly to her. Mrs. Bloys had not been in the best of health for some time, but her death at this time came as a surprise to her many friends here. Mrs. Bloys was 72 years of age, and she was born in Salem, Ill., coming to Texas following her marriage to T. D. Bloys. For many years she made her home in Honey Grove with her family, leaving here following the death of her husband to make her home with her son in Dallas. Mrs. Bloys was a woman loved by all who knew her. She was quiet of manner, generous by nature, forgiving in spirit and a woman whose every deed and every act was one of love and kindness. She was a devoted Christian, having united with the Presbyterian church when quite young and had through her long and useful life always lived so that when the summons came she could pass peacefully and hopefully into the other world. Mrs. Bloys is survived by her son, J. E. Bloys, two grandchildren, one [step] sister, Miss May Davenport of Illinois and one brother, Charles Davenport of St. Louis. She is also survived by other relatives in Paris and elsewhere. The remains were brought to Honey Grove Wednesday at noon over the Texas & Pacific railway, and they were taken to the home of Mrs. J. D. Moyer, where the funeral service was held at 3 o'clock Wednesday afternoon. Rev. E. H. Coston, pastor of the Presbyterian church, conducted the service, and a short but impressive service was held, following which the remains were laid to rest in Oakwood beside those of her husband who passed on a number of years ago. The Signal-Citizen joins with friends in extending to the bereaved son and other relatives heartfelt sympathy in their time of sorrow.
